

INSIDE WLJ

3 SNAPS FOR LAMB CHECKOFF — Study shows checkoff program significantly increased lamb value. Page 3

UP, DOWN & ALL AROUND — Cattle on Feed report shows decline in cattle across nation, but increase in feedlot numbers. Page 9

A LOOK BACK IN HISTORY

"USDA quietly announced last Monday that it had started accepting bone-in beef from Canada, and several anonymous sources within the agency indicated that live cattle from the U.S. neighbor to the north could be allowed within the next two, possibly three, weeks," read the April 26, 2004, WLJ cover story.

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BLM finalizes multiple-uses public lands rule

— Ag opposes final rule

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has finalized its rule for the management of multiple uses on public lands, which includes livestock grazing. Ag groups expressed concerns with the rule, arguing the changes will result in more restrictive land management and increase conflict between multiple uses.

The Public Lands Rule builds on the America the Beautiful initiative, the Biden administration's plan to protect and conserve land and water. The rule establishes restoration and mitigation leases and clarifies practices to designate and protect areas of critical environmental concern (ACEC).

"From the most rugged back-country spots to popular close-to-

home recreation areas, these reforms will help deliver cleaner water, healthier lands, abundant wildlife, and more recreation opportunities for all of us," said White House Council on Environmental Quality Chair Brenda Mallory in a statement.

The National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA) and Public Lands Council (PLC) said the rule

makes "serious additions" to the leasing structure for federal lands without congressional input.

"Changes that aren't based in law not only compromise the security of grazing on the landscape but make cohesive management much more challenging," said NCBA President Mark Eisele in a joint news

See BLM RULE on page 6



JD Mallory/BLM Utah

BLM has released its final rule regarding management of public lands for multiple uses. Pictured here, cattle grazing in the San Rafael Swell in south-central Utah.

USFWS proposal could stop ag on refuge land

— Livestock groups oppose

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) is proposing regulations and policy updates to safeguard the biological integrity, diversity and environmental health (BIDEH) of the National Wildlife Refuge System (NWRS). If implemented, these changes could potentially halt certain agricultural practices such as grazing, a move that has drawn strong opposition from livestock groups.

The agency said the proposed revisions are designed to strengthen and expand conservation efforts across the refuge system. They aim to address challenges such as climate change while also providing refuge managers with a standardized method to protect vulnerable species, restore habitats and en-

hance ecological resilience.

Under the proposed changes, the BIDEH policy principles prioritize wildlife conservation. The policy allows for natural processes to occur unless refuge conservation goals and objectives cannot be achieved.

Regulations proposed

The regulations offer a standard approach for using each management practice, but they also allow flexibility to utilize them as conservation tools when deemed necessary by the refuge manager. The management activities identified in the proposed BIDEH changes are:

- Native predator control: The agency would prohibit the control of predators because scientific evidence suggests they play a crucial role in maintaining biodiversity and ecosystem health. However, in spe-

cific cases where it's necessary to meet legal requirements, fulfill refuge goals, and ensure the integrity of the ecosystem, they may allow predator control.

- Conservation translocations: This would allow the introduction or reintroduction of a species to a refuge system outside its current range to avoid extinction or extirpation.

- Use of genetically engineered organisms: The proposal would prohibit the use of the use of plants, animals or other organisms that have been genetically modified through genetic engineering.

- Invasive species management: Refuge managers must take an integrated approach to controlling invasive species, using the species' life cycle in combination with

See BIDEH on page 7

Bovine flu spread leads to monitoring measures

— Virus fragments found in milk samples

As the number of dairy cattle affected by highly pathogenic H5N1 avian influenza (HPAI) increases, USDA has implemented reporting and testing measures for dairy cattle. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has also announced the discovery of virus fragments in pasteurized milk samples.

As of April 24, there were eight states with confirmed HPAI cases in 33 dairy cattle herds: Texas, Kansas, Michigan, New Mexico, Idaho, Ohio, South Dakota and North Carolina. USDA has confirmed the virus has been spread between cows in the same herd, from cows to poultry, and between dairies, and cows without clinical signs have tested positive.

New measures

On Monday, USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

(APHIS) announced an order effective April 29 that requires mandatory testing for dairy cattle moving interstate and mandatory reporting for positive tests.

Dairy cattle will be required to receive a negative test for influenza A virus at an approved National Animal Health Laboratory Network lab before interstate movement. Owners who have dairy cattle test positive will be required to provide epidemiological information, including movement tracing. Dairy cattle moving interstate will have to follow specific APHIS conditions.

At least 18 states have already implemented travel restrictions: Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Delaware, Florida, Hawaii, Idaho, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, Nebraska, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Utah and West Virginia.

Under the federal order, labs and state vets will be required to report

See HPAI on page 12

Slaughter numbers continue to creep higher

The market kicked off the week on a higher note following a bullish Cattle on Feed report, but saw fluctuations over the week thanks to external factors, mostly related to highly pathogenic avian flu (HPAI) updates.

"With more HPAI news surfacing and the futures market electing to react negatively to the virus, cattlemen are more focused on the market's fundamentals given that the virus isn't posing significant illness to infected cattle and the CDC continues to say there is little risk to humans," wrote ShayLe Stewart, DTN livestock analyst, in her Thursday closing comments.

Live cattle futures sold higher over the week. The April contract gained nearly \$3 to close at \$183.95, and the June contract gained \$2.43 to close at \$177.80.

Cash trade through Thursday totaled about 50,000 head. Live steers sold from \$182-186, and dressed steers sold from \$292-295.

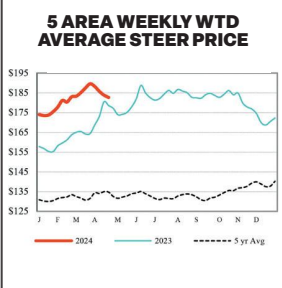
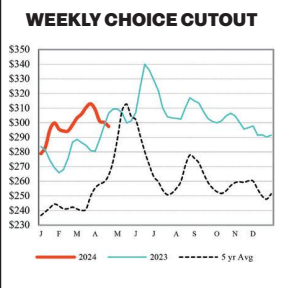
Cash trade for the week ending April 21 totaled 67,898 head. Live steers averaged \$182.74, and dressed steers averaged \$292.78.

Slaughter through Thursday totaled 488,000 head, on pace

with a week earlier. Projected slaughter for a week earlier is 620,000 head. Actual slaughter for the week ending April 13 was 597,882 head. The average dressed steer weight was 922 lbs., 3 lbs. above the prior week.

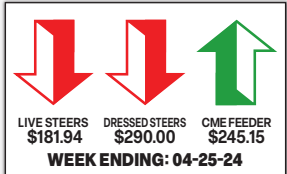
Boxed beef prices were slightly lower over the week, but overall sold mostly sideways. The Choice cutout lost 14 cents to close at \$295.66, and the Select cutout lost 86 cents to close at \$288.41.

"Paying up for cattle will push packer margins further into the red because boxed beef values continue to be stubbornly sluggish," said Cassie Fish, market analyst, in The Beef on Thursday.



USDA released its latest Cattle on Feed report on April 19, showing total cattle

See MARKETS on page 9



PERIODICAL : Time Sensitive Priority Handling

COMMENTS

What are they to do?

In a case of holding steady to his beliefs, 73-year-old Arizona cattle rancher George Alan Kelly gained victory April 22 in the Arizona Supreme Court as his trial was declared a mistrial. Although Kelly is now a free man, is it still a victory? There are so many circumstances surrounding this event that no one really wins in a case like this.

Details surrounding the actual event are still in question, but what we do know is that as jurors began deliberating on April 18, seven of the eight jurors were confident with a not-guilty verdict with one juror holding out to the point that Judge Thomas Fink walked out after declaring a mistrial.

In January of 2023, Kelly and his wife were on the back patio of their home when they encountered two armed men with vests and gear passing by their house about 100 feet away. Kelly, in defense of his property, claims he fired warning shots in the air and then dialed his border patrol liaison. At that time, nothing further was reported until later that day when they were called again and this time the body of 48-year-old Mexican national Gabriel Cuen-Buitimea was discovered. Details from here get murky and we probably won't ever know what actually happened.

In the forensics laboratory, the bullet that killed Buitimea was never recovered, preventing investigators from reaching a full conclusion as to which gun was the murder weapon. This piece of information stops this trial as conspiracies swirled from every angle, ranging from allegations against the arresting sheriff, who was captured on video claiming Kelly "wanted to hunt some Mexicans," to other theories suggesting that Buitimea was actually killed by the cartel, with Kelly being falsely accused.

Prosecutors offered Kelly a plea deal that would have lessened charges, but Kelly stood his ground, refused the deal and the results are that he chose the right path for his future.

Regardless of what the true story is, the outcome is that no one really wins in this situation. The situation on the southern border has exploded in recent years, but this is nothing new and is trending entirely the wrong way. From 2021 through 2023, there was a 40% increase in Southwest border patrol encounters by federal agents. Since January 2020, there have been 6.2 million encounters with an additional 1.7 million known "gotaways." Buitimea is documented to have been deported from the U.S. prior to his death.

There is simply a major crisis at the southern border and ranchers are usually the first to see migrants. The lure of the American life, cartel profits and trafficking, and soft laws of the U.S. have created a wave of migrants. Fellow ranchers are being overran.

WLJ doesn't condone any violence against another human being, but if you place yourself in the shoes of Kelly, what a hard spot to be in.

Just over 100 miles away, rancher Robert Krentz was killed in 2010 by an illegal immigrant crossing his cattle ranch. The cartel fears no authority, landowner or law because the reward is simply too great. Krentz's memory is still engrained in ranchers across America.

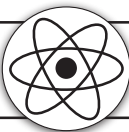
When waves of people are flowing from South America, guided through Mexico, and grow in numbers as they aim for the U.S., it is a breakdown of multiple systems. A system that should protect its own has forgotten who it needs to represent. For years, ranchers have checked cattle, fences, watering holes and their land while fully armed, not knowing what they'll encounter. Making sure their livestock are still where they need to can be a life-or-death event.

The double edge we see in this situation is that migration is essential for agriculture. We simply need migrant workers in nearly every stage of production, be it food crops or meat production. Migrant workers are an essential piece to the puzzle. Not every migrant is being trafficked, moving drugs, belongs to a cartel, etc. But there are enough situations that make every encounter a dangerous situation.

There won't be a victory in this situation because the true killers aren't known. There isn't a large enough deterrent to stop border crossings. There isn't a collaborative effort of several governments working together to stop these things from happening. For now, ranchers and landowners on the border are left to fend for themselves and when something goes wrong, they have to prove their innocence to the very system that failed them to begin with. If they defend themselves, they are put to trial and if they don't defend, they are murdered. What are they to do? — **LOGAN IPSEN**



IPSEN



RESOURCE SCIENCE

I reported a black wolf or dog that I saw in the range of the Mexican wolf in Arizona last year (WLJ Aug. 17, 2023). I thought it would interest government wildlife biologists because there are not supposed to be black Mexican wolves. As far as I know, they haven't followed up on the animal's status after I told them about it. The Mexican wolf's range is in Arizona and New Mexico, and there are black wolves in states to the north. If the animal is a black wolf, it likely migrated into the Mexican wolf population from the north. If the animal is a black dog, it indicates that interbreeding could occur between dogs and Mexican wolves because the animal was alone in the woods and unaccompanied by people.

The Mexican wolf is claimed to be genetically unique and an important form of wolf designated as a "subspecies." I've written about subspecies before and how the rigorous scientific community recognizes that subspecies are not definitive groups. Nevertheless, the Mexican wolf mixing with dogs—or northern wolves, which are a different subspecies—is a potential management problem because of the extensive efforts to preserve the "pure" Mexican wolf.

In addition to the animal I saw in Arizona, there are reports of black wolves in the range of the Mexican wolf in New Mexico. The Catron County wildlife investigator, Jess Carey, filed a Catron County Information Investigation Report about a solid black wolf and two gray wolves he saw near Luna, NM, in December 2023. Carey is a very experienced wildlife investigator, and his professional report includes photos of the animals' tracks. He noted in the report the animals looked like Mexican wolves and he thinks the three animals comprised a pack. He also recalls being told of a mated pair of a female gray wolf and a male black Labrador dog with a litter of six black pups in New Mexico near Old Horse Springs in Catron County several years ago. The USDA Wildlife Services killed five of the six pups and one got away. This observation needs official verification.

These sightings suggest that immigration of black wolves from the north and/or mating of Mexican wolves and dogs has occurred. Does it matter? Not from a practical standpoint. The wolves in Arizona and New Mexico kill livestock and big game, and genetics from northern wolves or dogs won't change that. It matters from a legal and regulation standpoint because the Mexican wolf is on the Endangered Species Act (ESA) list as a genetically unique subspecies and interbreeding with other wolves or dogs will change the Mexican wolf population's genetics. Environmentalists want to keep the native genetics intact, even though the native genetics are largely unknown because the current Mexican wolf population originated from only seven animals.

The Mexican wolf had inbreeding problems, and the gov-

ernment instituted a breeding program that reduced inbreeding depression. Some recent science shows an interesting perspective regarding inbreeding and immigration of northern wolves (See the References at wlj.net). On one hand, northern wolves interbreeding with Mexican wolves will reduce inbreeding and increase heterosis. This is the same effect that results from crossbreeding livestock. On the other hand, interbreeding with northern wolves will change the native Mexican wolf genetics.

The introduction of northern wolves to Colorado in December 2023 makes immigration of northern wolves into Mexican wolf range more likely because Colorado borders Arizona and New Mexico. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service acknowledges this in the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for introducing wolves to Colorado. They write in the EIS that they will work with the states to prevent the northern wolves from migrating to the range of Mexican wolves to preserve their genetic integrity, meaning their native genetics. It is not clear how they will do this.

As I mentioned, northern wolf genetics will increase the Mexican wolf population's genetic fitness with heterosis. This is indicated from studies of a coat color gene, called the *K*-gene which has two forms, the dominant *K* for black color and recessive *k* for gray color (see the Hedrick et al. 2016 paper in the References). Wolves and dogs with a *KK* or *Kk* genotype are black and *kk* are gray. It's similar to the dominant black and recessive red forms of the Angus coat color gene and the dominant polled and recessive horned gene in cattle. The *Kk* wolves show higher fitness, including better resistance to canine distemper, than the *KK* or *kk* wolves. There are currently no black Mexican wolves (except as suggested by the observations noted above), so bringing the *K* gene into the population would probably increase the Mexican wolf population's fitness.

People will have different opinions on the conflicting management objectives of maintaining the native genetics or increasing genetic fitness of the Mexican wolf. However, this issue demonstrates the problems with the ESA allowing listing of subspecies, and not only entire species as the law intended. Recall that the northern spotted owl is also a subspecies. The wolf genetics issues are also largely irrelevant to the most important management objective of protecting livestock and pets from predation by wolves, whatever their genetics. — **Dr. Matt Cronin**

(Matthew Cronin was a research professor at the University of Alaska and is now at Northwest Biology Company LLC in Bozeman, MT. He can be reached at croninm@aol.com. A full list of references can be found at wlj.net.)



OBITUARY



Dale Landrus; 1947-2024

Dale Landrus was born May 18, 1947, in Woodland, CA, to Paul and Marjorie Landrus. He was called home to the Lord on April 15, surrounded by his family at his home in Powell Butte, OR.

Dale was raised on a cattle and rice farm in Williams, CA. He farmed and ranched alongside his parents. At the age of 8, he purchased his first herd of cattle and sheep. Dale and Paul ran their cattle on the King Ranch in the foothills west of Williams.

Dale was active in 4-H and FFA. When he was in high school, he supported his livestock business by hauling stock in his dad's bobtail truck until he was able to purchase his own cattle truck. He trucked to and from the local auction yards in the Sacramento Valley. He often didn't impress his mom and teachers by hauling cattle in early mornings, making him late

for school. Aside from ranching and trucking, he worked at the Williams Auction Yard, owned by the Pennington family.

Dale had a love for rodeo and at a young age he started riding steers, cows and did team roping, which evolved into riding bareback horses. Dale continued his rodeo career through the 1980s.

Dale graduated from Williams High School in 1965. In September of 1966, he married the love of his life, Annette (Dee Dee) Erickson. Dale and Dee Dee were blessed with three daughters, Paula, Stefanie and Amy. They continued to live and ranch in Williams until they bought their ranch in Powell Butte in June 1973.

In the early 1980s, Dale built a rodeo arena on the ranch to share his love of rodeo with his daughters. He had bucking horses and raised bucking bulls. Dale wanted to provide an opportunity for local cowboys to practice.

In 1988, Dale became a representative for Superior Livestock Video Auction. He sold and shipped many head of cattle all over the U.S. until the time of his passing. Dale was also a fieldman for Cattlemen's Livestock Market in Galt, CA, as well as Central Oregon Livestock Market in Madras, OR.

Dale was an amazing husband, dad and PaPa. He was so proud of his daughters and grandkids. He loved kids and enjoyed being a mentor always willing to help, no matter the occasion.

Dale is survived by his wife, Dee Dee; his daughters, Paula Landrus of Powell Butte, Stefanie (and Dean Pettyjohn) of Powell Butte and Amy Landrus (and T.J. Clark) of Powell, WY; grandson, Hadley

Reece; granddaughters, Rieta and Dally Clark; brother, Gary of Toronto, Canada; and nephew, Benjamin Landrus of Canada.

Dale was preceded in death by his parents, Paul and Marjorie Landrus; grand-

parents, Leonard and Ethyl Landrus, Henry and Mamie Wright; and numerous aunts, uncles and cousins.

Memorial contributions may be made to St. Charles Foundation Hospice in Dale's name at tinyurl.com/5ffzsbtf.

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WLJ

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Study shows effectiveness of lamb checkoff

— \$16.60 cost-to-benefit ratio

According to a new report from Texas A&M University,

the American Lamb Checkoff Program has significantly elevated the annual value of American lamb, achieving notable success despite the

relatively modest funding allocated for promotion.

"The purpose of the Lamb Checkoff has been to increase demand for American lamb,"

said American Lamb Board (ALB) Chairman Jeff Ebert in a statement. "The results of this study confirm that despite a small budget, ALB's promo-

tional efforts have successfully resulted in increased demand for lamb."

According to the study, "Return on Investment in the American Lamb Checkoff Program," lamb consumption increased from \$1.17 billion to \$1.31 billion. The surge was credited to ALB's promotional efforts, leading to average annual growth ranging between \$58.7 million and \$62.4 million.

The study revealed the Lamb Checkoff program spends minimal funds on lamb promotion compared to the annual revenue generated from lamb sales, with just 4.3 cents spent for every \$100 in retail revenue. Additionally, the research delved into income-related lamb demand, finding a correlation where a 10% increase in income led to a 2.7% rise in lamb demand.

It also found beef prices were identified as a significant factor influencing lamb demand, with a 10% increase in beef prices resulting in a 6.8%

surge in lamb demand. The study also looked at the price increase for other proteins and found demand increases on a smaller scale. A 10% increase in pork prices resulted in a modest 1.2% lamb consumption. Lamb consumers do not consider poultry a substitute.

The Texas A&M study highlighted the cost-to-benefit ratio as another significant measure of the checkoff program's impact. It revealed that industry stakeholders gained approximately \$16.60 for every \$1 invested in promotion. Moreover, the study indicated that for each dollar not contributed by stakeholders and consequently not utilized for lamb promotion, industry stakeholders missed an average of \$16.60 in potential additional revenue.

The last study conducted by Texas A&M was in 2019, and it showed that the cost-to-benefit ratio was \$14.20 for every \$1 invested. — **Charles Wallace, WLJ contributing editor**

USDA questioned about H5N1 information sharing

USDA's response to highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) spreading from birds to cattle is drawing fire from multiple areas.

A Bloomberg column on April 23 cited, "The H5N1 crisis at dairy farms shows that public health agencies have failed to absorb the lessons of COVID."

A CNN article noted that researchers trying to track the spread of H5N1 say some USDA data released recently "isn't very useful and is anything but transparent. They also say the government's release of information in the outbreak, which was confirmed in cattle almost a month ago, has been 'painfully slow.'"

Scientists raised concerns about how USDA will handle asymptomatic cows. Cattle in a North Carolina herd were reported to have the virus but show no symptoms. Scientists also pointed out influenza viruses can quickly mutate.

The New York Times (NYT) reported about repeated assurance from officials about the safety of pasteurized milk, but the outbreak with cows could still be more serious than initially believed. "In an obscure online update this week, the Department of Agriculture said there is now evidence that the virus is spreading among cows, and from cows to poultry," the New York Times reported.

Science magazine reported, "Eight U.S. states have reported infected cows, but government scientists have released few details about how the virus is spreading."

As of April 23, 33 dairy herds in eight states have been con-

firmed as infected by USDA's National Veterinary Services Laboratories. The latest was another Idaho dairy on April 19.

As noted, USDA sought to share 239 genetic sequences, including those from cattle, cats, chickens, skunk, racoon, grackle, blackbird and goose. But the raw data lacks some of the information about how the samples were collected, for instance, that helps scientists figure out how the virus may be changing, CNN reported.

Essentially, there are experts who feel USDA is slow and limited in releasing data and it's hurting the ability to understand the virus.

"There's a whole community around the world of people like me and my colleagues, who have a lot of experience with this and often can see things or do analyses that might show something that others have missed," said Michel Worobey, a professor of ecology and evolutionary science at the University of Arizona.

Worobey added, "You don't want essentially one group to be the only ones looking at the data. You want everyone, all the experts around the world to be able to do that."

The New York Times article added, "If the department (USDA) were more forthcoming, scientists outside the government could already be helping to contain the virus," Dr. Tom Inglesby, director of the Johns Hopkins Center for Health Security at the Bloomberg School of Public Health, said.

"The days when it was seen

as a good plan or acceptable for a government agency to keep all data to manage on its own are gone long ago," he said.

In the NYT article, Dr. Rosemary Sifford, USDA's chief veterinarian, pointed out the volume of staff involved in the investigations. "Please recall that we've been engaged in this for less than a month," she said. "We are working very hard to generate more information."

But as Bloomberg columnist Lisa Jarvis explained, "The USDA's approach to sharing information illustrates part of the problem. Last week, the agency came out with its first public admission of cow-to-cow and cow-to-poultry transmission. Those key nuggets

weren't shared in a press release, but rather were buried in the 'FAQ' document. In other words, the USDA isn't exactly keeping secrets, but it also isn't exactly highlighting important developments. That approach counters everything we learned during COVID."

DTN had requested USDA hold a press conference with Sifford or other officials, but the department has not responded.

USDA Secretary Tom Vilsack said the number of dairy farmers affected is small and the virus is not fatal to cows. He said a bigger challenge remains dealing with HPAI in poultry.

— **Chris Clayton, DTN ag policy editor**

Spring grazing to control weeds

Spring flash grazing in pastures can be a way to capitalize on some of the early weeds that may be growing. For those areas that had drought conditions in 2023, it is likely that many pastures will have more spring and summer weeds than usual this year.

Drought last year also has led to the general recommendation of delaying turn out to pasture, but early flash grazing can be an option to reduce growth of some of those weeds. Flash grazing is the process of quickly rotating through pastures early, before they are scheduled for their main summer grazing period.

When flash grazing mixed cool- and warm-season grass pastures, we do want to be a little more cautious as to not overgraze any desirable cool-season grasses. In areas where cheatgrass or downy brome is a problem, grazing at strategic windows, such as during the cheatgrass elongation phase right before seed

set, appears to be the best time to apply grazing.

Grazing at this time matches diet preference by grazing animals with the cheatgrass growth period and limits over use on perennial cool-season grasses growing at the same time. Targeted grazing is a long-term management option that can utilize cheatgrass as a forage resource and limit the potential seed proliferation within a system.

In warm-season grass pastures, an abundance of early weeds will remove moisture that could be used for grass growth later on and they remove valuable nutrients from the soil. Early weeds also can develop so much growth that they can shade, smother and reduce early growth of your summer pasture grasses.

While early flash grazing of some pastures will not eliminate all the weeds, it can actually make for some pretty timely and valuable pasture. — **Jerry Volesky, Nebraska Extension**

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Stepaside Rita 3088 [DVAR Huckleberry 871 x Vintage Rita 0184]
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0 3.5 82 145 26 63 1.36 1.01 81 200 340

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Worth Ranch to receive Nebraska Leopold Conservation Award

Worth Ranch of Springview, NE, is the recipient of the 2024 Nebraska Leopold Conservation Award.

The award honors farmers, ranchers, and forestland owners who go above and beyond in their management of soil health, water quality and wildlife habitat on working land.

Cork and Janet Worth raise beef cattle and own the 8,000-acre Worth Ranch in Keya Paha County. The Worths will be presented with \$10,000 and a crystal award at the Alliance for the Future of Agriculture in Nebraska (AFAN) annual meeting in November.

Sand County Foundation and national sponsor American Farmland Trust present Leopold Conservation Awards to private landowners in 27 states. In Nebraska, the award is presented with AFAN, Cargill and the Nebraska Environmental Trust.

When Malvern “Cork” Worth purchased his first piece of land in 1962, he recognized the need for change.

The 1,424 acres in Keya Paha County was a far cry from the productive grassland it is today. It had been overstocked with beef cattle and horses with poor fencing and water distribution.

Cork’s intuition told him

his cattle needed to be rotated through more than one pasture during the grazing season. He would embrace and improve upon that concept once he and wife Janet began practicing managed grazing in the 1970s.

“Ten acres to the cow, and never take more than 50% of the grass in a given year” was the hard-and-fast stocking rate they established. This simple yet stern method of grazing management has created a resilient deep-rooted plant community that can rapidly recover from drought.

“We could have run more cattle over the years but trying to squeeze every last productive dollar out of your grazing resource year after year is a recipe for failure,” Cork explained.

The Worths saw growing native prairie and perennial grass as the best use of their land from economic and environmental standpoints. With grass their only marketable commodity they stopped raising hogs, sheep and dairy cattle to focus solely on Angus beef cattle.

“We wanted to develop some of the best Angus cattle in the industry, and it wasn’t even a question that we had to have the best grass resource to do this,” Janet

said.

As the Worths expanded their ranch to 8,000 acres they installed a livestock water pipeline system and cross fencing that allows them to move cattle between 40 pastures. Each has two water tanks fed by a combination of electric submersible wells, windmills and solar wells. The rotational grazing system has created a mosaic of habitat types for beneficial pollinators, turkeys, grassland birds and deer.

More than 22,000 trees have been planted on Worth Ranch since 1971. Trees control wind erosion, enhance wildlife habitat, and provide livestock protection in the form of shelter belts. Drip irrigation and mulch to conserve water were added on several of the belts to encourage growth and vigor of trees. There’s also hardly a noxious weed to be found on Worth Ranch thanks to their early detection/rapid response weed management method.

Through innovative conservation practices, Worth Ranch has been able to endure climate extremes. Its well-managed and conservatively stocked pastures and meadowlands have allowed the Worths to main-

tain their cattle numbers during hot, dry summers without relying on outside sources for winter feed.

Through meticulous breeding and performance records, the Worths established a productive and profitable Angus herd that has helped them deal with the ebbs and flows of the ever-changing cattle market.

In recent years they have taken a step back in the beef business to help the next generation of ranchers. While downsizing their own herd, they pasture cattle for five local families during the grazing season. This allows the Worths to continue their grass management efforts while reducing their workload during the winter. It also creates awareness of how sound conservation can create abundant, resilient grassland on their own ranches.

“The recipients of this award are examples of how Aldo Leopold’s land ethic is alive and well today. Their dedication to conservation shows how individuals can improve the health of the land while producing food and fiber,” said Kevin McAleese, Sand County Foundation president and CEO. — **Sand County Foundation**

LEGAL LEDGER

USDA halts UNR facility’s slaughter

USDA’s Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) halted operations at the University of Nevada, Reno’s Wolf Pack Meats processing facility following an incident related to inhumane treatment. In a notice of suspension, USDA said it was suspending the facility following a failure to slaughter an animal properly. The agency said an FSIS member witnessed an employee using a handheld captive bolt on a ram five times before the animal was rendered unconscious. The FSIS member stopped the slaughter line and investigated, finding small horn buds obstructing the ram’s head, allowing for only one entry hole to contact the brain. “This is an egregious act of inhumane handling of animals in connection with slaughter, as your establishment failed to effectively stun a ram so that it was immediately unconscious on the first stun attempt,” the notice read. The facility must write to the agency and provide corrective action and preventative measures before the USDA makes a determination of further administrative action. This is the fifth incident in five years for the college’s processing facility.

Walmart settles pricing lawsuit

Walmart has agreed to settle for \$45 million in a class action lawsuit alleging the retailer used deceptive business practices when selling sold-by-weight items. The lawsuit said the company inflated product weights, mislabeling bagged produce and overcharging on clearance products. Shoppers allegedly paid more for certain sold-by-weight products than the price advertised. Consumers who purchased certain weighted meat and produce items are eligible for cash payments. To submit a claim, visit tinyurl.com/2hyjksd2.

Haaland protects NM public land

Secretary of the Interior Deb Haaland signed Public Land Order 7940 on April 18, protecting more than 4,200 acres of Bureau of Land Management public lands in the Placitas, NM, area. The lands are now closed to new mining claims, mineral sales, and oil and gas leases for at least the next half century. “The site contains significant cultural ties to neighboring Pueblos and provides outdoor recreation opportunities to the local community,” Haaland said. The Interior Department announced the proposed protections last fall, which led to a public commenting period and public meeting. A second comment period was held earlier this year before the protections were finalized in April.

\$4.8M allocated for drought funding

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) announced a \$4.8 million investment to improve drought resilience and water availability in the West. The funding, supported by the Inflation Reduction Act and Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, will be invested in agreements with BLM partners. A total of \$1.9 million is allocated for riverscape health, \$975,000 for adjudication of water rights for National Conservation Lands in Arizona, \$880,000 to quantify streamflow and groundwater levels within the Río Grande del Norte National Monument in New Mexico, and other projects. “The funding announced today will put people to work on our public lands to help reduce the impacts of prolonged droughts on communities and wildlife, better positioning the BLM to safeguard the health of our public lands for current and future generations,” said BLM Director Tracy Stone-Manning.

Update on potential grocer acquisition

Kroger Co. and Albertsons Companies Inc. have amended their agreement with C&S Wholesale Grocers LLC for the sale of assets regarding their proposed merger. “The updated divestiture plan continues to ensure no stores will close as a result of the merger and that all frontline associates will remain employed, all existing collective bargaining agreements will continue, and associates will continue to receive industry-leading health care and pension benefits alongside bargained-for wages,” said Rodney McMullen, Kroger chairman and CEO. He continued that the merger will bring lower prices and more choices for consumers. The updated agreement increases the total store count to 579 stores that will be sold and continue operating as they are by C&S.

Comments sought on NM monument plan

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is seeking comment on the draft amendment to the Taos Resource Management Plan and environmental assessment for the Río Grande del Norte National Monument Management Plan. The monument spans nearly 243,000 acres and was designated in 2013 under the Antiquities Act. BLM said the amendment will protect and restore monument objects while allowing for the use of lands and resources. Comments can be submitted at tinyurl.com/mvt8ra8u by May 23. A virtual meeting will be held on May 9 at 6-8 p.m. MDT via Zoom at tinyurl.com/mtryr277.



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STORY SHORTS

More wolf depredations, one dead in CO

Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) reported an additional four cattle yearlings were killed due to depredation from wolves in Grand County as a dead wolf was discovered in Larimer County. According to local news outlet Fox21, Grand County Commissioner Merrit Linke said the latest depredations occurred in the area of a previous calf loss on April 2. On April 18, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) was alerted to the discovery of a deceased gray wolf in Larimer County. USFWS initiated an investigation and sent the carcass for a necropsy to ascertain the cause of death, although preliminary indications suggest natural causes. This wolf was part of a group of 10 released by CPW in December 2023, and USFWS is collaborating with CPW in the ongoing inquiry. News of the deceased wolf comes as stockgrowers associations in Grand, Jackson and Larimer counties asked Gov. Jared Polis (D) and CPW to remove wolves responsible for depredations. According to Fox21, the Larimer County Stock Growers expressed concern that effective communication should be a priority for communities most impacted by wolf reintroduction, yet they perceive the opposite as happening. They criticized CPW for not utilizing available technology to promptly provide real-time tracking information on reintroduced wolves to ranchers and residents, leading to increased conflicts and straining partnerships in conservation efforts. CPW reported a partially functional collar in March has since failed, marking the second collar failure. CPW also announced they will no longer issue press releases regarding Collared Gray Wolf Activity Map updates. However, the website will continue to be updated with recent activity on the fourth Wednesday of every month.

WA wolf population up 20%

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) released its annual wolf count, showing 260 wolves in 42 packs in the state, a 20% increase from the previous year. WDFW reported that in 2023 it saw the formation or reestablishment of seven wolf packs, including the Beaver Creek Pack in Okanogan County, the Skookum Pack in Pend Oreille County, the Ruby Pack in Stevens County, the Couse Pack in Asotin County, and the Dollar Mountain, Nason and Scatter packs in Ferry County that overlap portions of the Confederated Tribes of the Coville Reservation. Despite this increase, the reported incidents of wolf depredation on domestic animals did not significantly rise. While the state's wolf population grew to 25 successful breeding pairs, documented depredation events remained relatively stable, with 23 confirmed or probable cases recorded by WDFW. The agency has released a status review for wolves in the state, suggesting a reclassification to sensitive status due to substantial strides in meeting recovery goals. The proposal for reclassification is anticipated to be deliberated upon by the Washington Fish and Wildlife Commission in July.

Warning for potential E. coli in ground beef

USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) announced it has issued a public health alert regarding ground beef products potentially contaminated with E. coli. Although no recall has been requested, as the products are no longer available for purchase, FSIS wishes to raise public awareness of the issue. Produced on March 28 with a "Use/freeze by" date of April 22 and a packaging date of "032824," the affected raw ground beef items bear establishment number "EST. 960A" and were distributed to food service institutions and retail locations across the country. The list of products subject to the public health alert can be found at tinyurl.com/4df67rh9. FSIS is concerned that certain products might be stored in consumers' and food service institutions' freezers. Consumers who have bought these items are advised against consuming them, while food service institutions are advised not to serve them. It's recommended that these products be disposed of or returned to the store where they were purchased.

CA's carbon neutrality initiative

California has unveiled 81 targets for nature-based solutions, aligning with Gov. Gavin Newsom's (D) Climate Commitment. These targets aim to aid in achieving the state's ambitious climate goals, including carbon neutrality by 2045. Nature-based solutions play a crucial role in absorbing carbon emissions, the state said, investing approximately \$9.6 billion in such initiatives since 2020. By 2045, some targets include managing 33.5 million acres to reduce wildfire risk, 11.9 million acres of forest for biodiversity and carbon storage and conserving 7.6 million acres and 3.4 million acres of croplands for healthy soils and drought resilience. "We're setting aggressive and ambitious new targets to use California's lands to fight the climate crisis," Newsom said. "This scale of action is unprecedented, and yet another example of California punching above its weight. From restoring and conserving lands to greening our urban spaces and treating more acres to prevent wildfires, we're protecting nature and allowing it to work for our communities."

Biden administration unveils Conservation Atlas

— PLC apprehensive

As part of President Joe Biden's "America the Beautiful" initiative, the Biden administration unveiled conservation.gov, a website that connects people and communities to resources to further land and water conservation efforts in the U.S.

Conservation.gov includes a beta version of the Conservation and Stewardship Atlas, developed through an interagency partnership. It was established through collaborative efforts between the Department of the Interior, USDA, the Department of Commerce's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the White House Council on Environmental Quality.

"Conservation.gov will serve as one tool to empower communities across the country to identify opportunities to further their vision for conservation," said Secretary of the Interior Deb Haaland. "The Department of the Interior is proud to partner with agencies across the federal government, Tribes, private landowners and other stakeholders as

we build on the nation's best conservation traditions and ensure that we have the tools to measure and multiply these critical efforts."

According to a news release, the atlas provides users with scientific information to empower and motivate individuals, land managers, policymakers and communities by offering insights into conservation and restoration efforts concerning land, water and wildlife. The website also features an interactive map highlighting conservation and restoration efforts by the agencies and a catalog to access the data used within the atlas.

The atlas serves as a tool for tracking progress toward the Biden administration's goal of protecting, conserving or restoring at least 30% of U.S. lands and waters by 2030. It notes that while progress has been made toward the 30% goal, with the administration conserving 41 million acres since 2021, it has yet to achieve the mark. It also highlights current conservation efforts, which have resulted in approximately one-third of U.S. marine areas being conserved.

The Public Lands Council (PLC) in its Weekly Round-up newsletter expressed apprehension over the administration's narrow focus on projects funded directly by them as the sole criteria for defining "conserved" or "preserved" areas, disregarding the extensive history of land stewardship by producers both on public and private lands.

"While PLC's request to include private lands under conservation programs was included, there seems to be

little recognition that grazing and range improvements on federal land mean the land is conserved," PLC wrote.

PLC said that while the atlas effectively integrates GIS data, it primarily consolidates federal programs without yielding substantial new insights.

PLC encourages producers to share their thoughts or concerns at info@publiclandscouncil.org. — **Charles Wallace, WLJ contributing editor**



YOUTH OPPORTUNITIES

(In an effort to serve the next generation of livestock producers, WLJ's Youth Opportunities calendar lists internship and scholarship information for agricultural- and livestock-focused students, listed by application deadline. If you have an internship or scholarship to announce, please email it to editorial@wlj.net.)

May 1 – Angus Foundation scholarship applications are now open. Applicants for undergraduate and graduate scholarships must have, at one time, been a member of the National Junior Angus Association and currently be an active junior, regular or life member of the American Angus Association.

Details: AngusFoundation.org.

May 1 – The New Mexico Cattle Growers' Association Young Cattlemen's Leadership Committee \$1,000 Graduate Scholarship is open to New Mexico residents with a background in beef cattle production who are actively pursuing a post-graduate degree in any field. Details: www.nmagriculture.org.

May 31 – Applications are now open for two internships with the National Cattlemen's Beef Association, a public policy internship and a meetings and events internship. Internships begin in August 2024 and end in December 2024. Details: ncba.org.



2024 AUCTION SCHEDULE

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DATE	AUCTION	LOCATION	DEADLINE
May 1	Holstein Auction	Hudson Oaks, TX	April 29
May 2	Video Auction	Hudson Oaks, TX	April 22
May 16	Video Auction	Hudson Oaks, TX	May 6
May 30	Video Auction	Hudson Oaks, TX	May 20
June 10 - 11	Corn Belt Classic	South Sioux City, NE	May 24
June 19	Holstein Auction	El Dorado, KS	June 17
June 20	Tallgrass Auction	El Dorado, KS	June 17
June 27	Video Auction	Hudson Oaks, TX	June 17
July 8 - 12	Week In The Rockies	Snowbird, UT	June 21
July 17	Holstein Auction	Hudson Oaks, TX	July 15
July 29 - Aug 2	Video Royale	Winnemucca, NV	July 12
Aug 14	Holstein Auction	Hudson Oaks, TX	Aug 12
Aug 19 - 23	Big Horn Classic	Sheridan, WY	Aug 2
Sept 3	Holstein Auction	Hudson Oaks, TX	Aug 30
Sept 4 - 5	Labor Day Auction	Hudson Oaks, TX	Aug 20
Sept 19	Video Auction	Hudson Oaks, TX	Sept 9
Oct 2	Holstein Auction	Hudson Oaks, TX	Sept 30
Oct 3	Video Auction	Hudson Oaks, TX	Sept 23
Oct 17	Video Auction	Hudson Oaks, TX	Oct 7
Nov 6	Holstein Auction	Hudson Oaks, TX	Nov 4
Nov 7	Video Auction	Hudson Oaks, TX	Oct 28
Nov 21	Video Auction	Hudson Oaks, TX	Nov 11
Dec 4	Holstein Auction	Hudson Oaks, TX	Dec 2
Dec 5	Video Auction	Hudson Oaks, TX	Nov 22
Dec 19	Video Auction	Hudson Oaks, TX	Dec 9

Selecting sires to create replacement females

When selecting sires, beef producers have a lot of data to reference, said the experts at Kansas State (K-State) University's Beef Cattle Institute on a recent "Cattle Chat" podcast.

The experts focused on selecting bulls that could work as

sires mated to first-calf heifers, and that the female calves from this mating could be retained in the herd as replacement heifers.

“When it comes to heifer matings, it is important to look at the potential sires’ calving

ease direct EPD, but I also recommend using a selection index as part of the sire selection process," said Bob Weaber, K-State beef cattle geneticist and head of the Eastern Kansas Research Extension program.

are built from multiple data inputs, which gives producers more information than a single-trait data point, such as an EPD.

"Many producers are looking to manage mature cow size and lactation potential to control maintenance and production costs and that is where using selection indexes can help," Weaber said. "Using a selection index that is targeted towards replacement females and understanding the marketing endpoint is valuable because it balances out the pressure from growth and performance relative to cost."

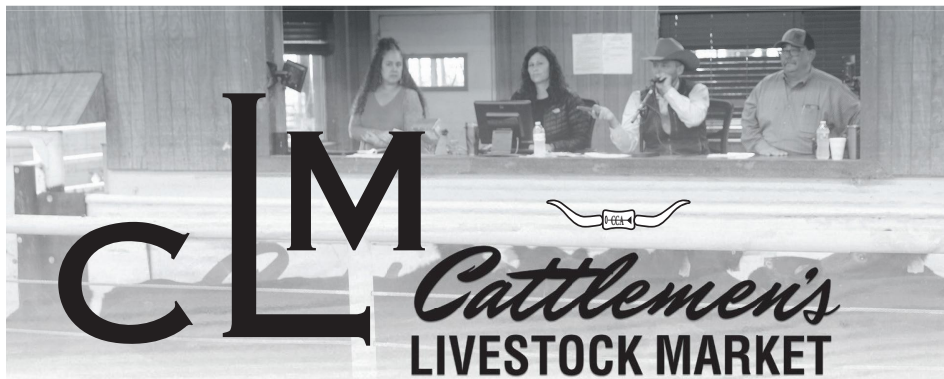
K-State veterinarian Bob Larson agreed and added that the beef breed associations and artificial insemination bull studs make that data available to producers working through the sire selection process.

"Each breed association has slightly different indexes, but they are similar, and for building matings to create replacement heifers, it is important to select a bull that is high for the maternal index," Larson said.

When Weaber works through this process, he goes to searchable databases to put in his criteria and then sorts

through the rankings provided to him.

“Start the search to find the index for the best-performing animals to meet the marketing endpoint and then sort that sub-group for the single trait that you are most concerned about,” Weaber said. “So, in the case of planning matings to heifers that will be used to create replacement heifers, first sort on the maternal index and then calving ease direct. By doing that you are optimizing the most economically important traits.” — **K-State Research and Extension**



BLM rule puts greater focus on ACECs

BLM RULE

release with PLC.

The ag groups said the final rule runs counter to the BLM's multiple use mandate under the Federal Land Policy and Management Act, which requires the agency to balance the multiple uses of lands that include grazing, recreation, energy, mining and timber.

"The 'Conservation and Landscape Health' rule rearranges agency priorities by putting a new, single use on equal footing with long established uses that Congress explicitly directed," the groups said.

In addition, they continued, the rule places an "outsized focus" on the use of ACEC designations that have "compro-

mised land and water health across the West.”

This has resulted in “a framework that gives the BLM more restrictive land management, increased conflict on the landscape, and an increased difficulty in delivering on the agency mission and programs to stakeholders across the West,” the groups said.

Rule updates

The final rule was first proposed last April and has sparked continuous contention within the ag community. The agency received more than 200,000 comments on the rule, which it says were vastly in favor of the rule.

The final rule addresses three key concepts:

- Directs BLM to manage for landscape health.
- Restores and protects public lands through restoration and mitigation leases.
- Clarifies the designation and management of ACECs.

The first concept directs BLM to manage public land uses "in accordance with the fundamentals of land health" which it says will support soils, plants, water, ecosystems and wildlife habitats.

The second concept clarifies who can obtain a restoration or mitigation lease, limiting potential lessees to individuals, businesses, non-governmental organizations, Tribal governments, conservation districts, or state fish and wildlife agencies. These leases would be issued or denied at BLM's discretion.

BLM uses the example of a potential restoration lease allowing a non-profit group or conservation district to restore wildlife habitat, with the assurance that "the work could take hold and flourish." The agency said leases would not be issued if they would conflict with existing authorized users.

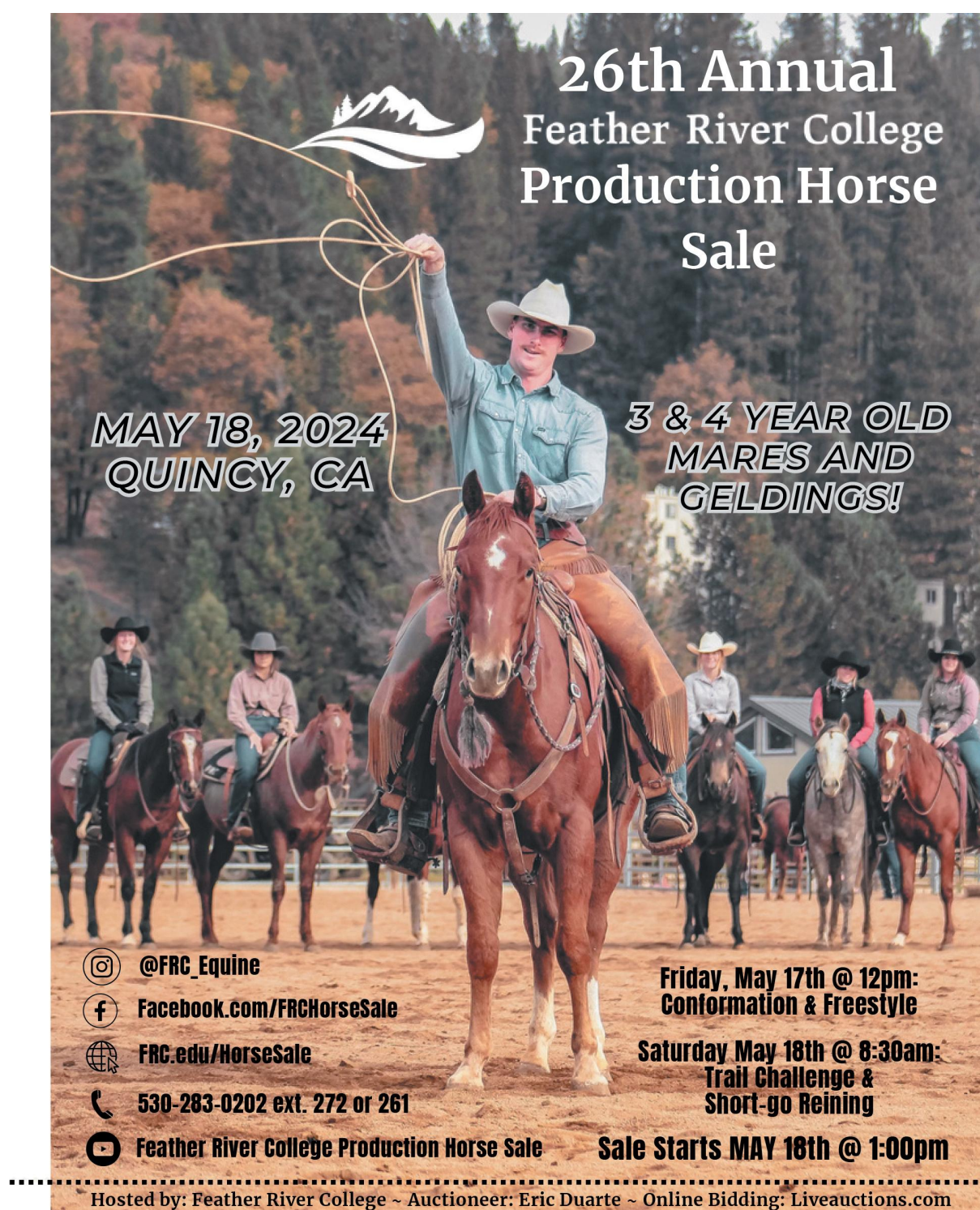
The third concept provides more details about how the agency will prioritize the designation and protection of ACECs. "The final rule clarifies how BLM consideration of new ACEC nominations and temporary management options does not interfere with the BLM's discretion to continue advancing pending project applications," BLM said.

NCBA and PLC, along with more than 60 other local and national ag groups, submitted comments to BLM prior to the rule's finalization, highlighting concerns with the rule's implications on the relationship between public lands permittees and federal agencies.

"Ecosystem services like wildfire mitigation, cutting down on invasive species, sequestering carbon, improving wildlife habitat, and preserving open green space for recreation are essential contributions of the Western ranching industry—not to mention the \$2.1 billion in economic output attributable to livestock grazing on BLM land," the groups finished.

The rule had not yet been posted in the Federal Register by *WLJ* press time. — **Anna Miller, *WLJ* managing editor**

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Early alfalfa irrigation

Alfalfa is a tough perennial with established rooting depths down 8 feet or more. Depending on deep soil profile moisture, some varieties can extend spring dormancy and survive up to 45 days without rainfall. However, forage yields drop dramatically, since alfalfa requires about 6 inches of root available water to produce one ton of forage per acre.

So, what irrigation strategy is recommended for alfalfa during the early spring season prior to the first cutting? Remember that once perennial alfalfa plants experience moisture deficiency, soil moisture storage catch-up through irrigation is difficult especially during the hot summer season due to high evapotranspiration water needs. Also, stressed plants may drop leaves prematurely, even if the alfalfa cutting is harvested before the recommended one-tenth bloom alfalfa development stage to salvage yield. This timing disruption may impact

target irrigation just prior to the first cutting to increase regrowth tonnage for the succeeding crop.

Early season irrigation linked with first cutting alfalfa can potentially lower water use sharply because transpiration is lower when the leaf foliage is removed. Following the first cutting, irrigation might be delayed slightly in fields where weeds could respond quicker to the moisture than alfalfa regrowth.

Otherwise, full water irrigation or rainfall target amounts will be typically 6-7 inches of water for each subsequent cutting. Spring water usage may only be one-fourth inch per day but will rapidly increase as summer temperatures rise. Peak water alfalfa usage in July and August can extend beyond the normal one-third inch per day (or two inches per week) to a half inch per day during extreme stress times. — **Todd Whitney, Nebraska Extension**

ESAP award presented to Texas ranch

The National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA) announced that G Bar C Ranch in Rosston, TX, is the 2023 National Environmental Stewardship Award Program (ESAP) winner.

The award, which annually recognizes the outstanding stewardship practices and conservation achievements of cattle producers, was presented to the Ellis family during NCBA's annual Spring Legislative Conference in Washington, D.C.

"For our operation, this is a lifetime achievement award, and this is a moment I will remember for the rest of my life," said Meredith Ellis of G Bar C Ranch. "It took me going far away to college and coming home to realize just how special ranching is and how I want to be just like my greatest mentor, my father."

G Bar C Ranch, located north of Dallas, continues to improve ranching practices in ways that nurture the environment while remaining economically sustainable. The Ellises see themselves as caretakers of the land, maintaining biodiversity, natural habitat and clean waterways. There have been more than 500 species of plants, animals and insects found thriving on the ranch alongside grazing cattle.

"Stewardship means that I am a shepherd and must take care of all the living things that call this place home," said Ellis. "No animal, plant or insect is too insignificant for consideration."

G Bar C Ranch implements an adaptive multi-paddock strategy that rotates cattle through 58 permanently fenced pastures. Wheat Creek runs through the ranch and

eventually feeds into the Trinity River, which is a water source responsible for half of Texans' water needs. The Ellis family grazes in a manner that keeps the vegetative filters and sponges working effectively and prevents erosion, keeping water clear and pure.

The family also strives to keep carbon stored in the soil by minimizing disturbance. The ranch is a living laboratory and opens its gates to researchers from organizations, universities and other institu-

tions. Some of the research has found that G Bar C Ranch is sequestering 2,500 tons of carbon dioxide, which is equivalent to taking 551 cars off the road every year.

"It is because of cattle that our grazing lands are as abundant and full of life as they are," said Ellis. "Whenever I share my story, I think of my son, and know that it's not about me, but it's about his future and what it is going to look like."

Established in 1991, ESAP

identifies outstanding land stewards in the cattle industry. Each year, regional award winners are recognized with one being honored as the national winner.

"Cattle producers across the country are committed to being good stewards of natural resources," said NCBA President Mark Eisele. "G Bar C Ranch is an exceptional example of the dedication required to share the land with future generations."

ESAP is generously spon-

sored by companies and federal agencies who share the cattle industry's commitment to caring for the environment and protecting natural resources. Sponsors including USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service, Corteva Agriscience and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service partner with NCBA to promote environmental stewardship throughout the beef supply chain. For more information, visit www.environmentalstewardship.org. — NCBA

USFWS will err on preservation side

BIDEH (from page 1)

mechanical, chemical, biological and cultural tools.

- Pesticide use: Following the Department of the Interior and USFWS guidelines, the agency strives to reduce or, when possible, eliminate the use of pesticides.

- Agricultural use: Agricultural uses would be permitted within the refuge system only when wildlife objectives or legal mandates cannot be achieved through natural ecosystem processes or management efforts.

Agriculture use could be implemented only when it contributes to fish and wildlife conservation and enhances biodiversity, environmental health and ecosystem integrity, the agency said. Using pesticides and genetically engineered organisms is prohibited except in rare circumstances.

Grazing and logging are only permitted unless they are permitted in management plans, consistent with refuge purposes and aligned with BIDEH principles. Livestock grazing would be permitted when "more natural methods, such as fire or grazing by native herbivores, cannot achieve refuge goals and objectives."

USFWS said that if there is a conflict between the goals of ensuring and preserving biodiversity, they will err on the preservation side, but it might mean adjusting actions to prevent long-term harm to biodiversity within the refuge. To address challenges like climate change, USFWS said it may need to compromise certain aspects within the refuge to benefit biodiversity on a larger scale.

Opposition

The Public Lands Council (PLC) and several livestock associations expressed their concerns with the proposed changes. In a letter to USFWS Director Martha Williams on

April 15, they suggested maintaining grazing on public lands and highlighted the potential negative impacts of the proposed changes on their operations.

The letter encouraged USFWS to recognize managed livestock grazing as a scientifically supported method for enhancing biodiversity and ecological well-being on NWRS landscapes. PLC said grazing offers multiple ecosystem benefits that have been proven to enhance landscape resilience against invasive species, wildfires and climate change impacts. Through effective management practices, grazing can be a natural process fostering biodiversity and ecological health on refuge lands, the group said.

The letter continued livestock grazing is tightly regulated and managed, and diverting grazing for other purposes would lead to a less controlled landscape, undermining refuge objectives. The letter asks the final rule to explicitly safeguard existing cooperative agriculture agreements, ensuring that introducing species like bison or bighorn sheep with disease management concerns won't displace cattle and sheep.

The Montana Stockgrowers Association submitted comments emphasizing the critical role of livestock grazing in maintaining land health, conserving habitat, supporting rural communities and boosting the economy. They also raised concerns about the potential negative impacts on cattle operations surrounding the refuges if predatory species are introduced to the landscape.

Comments on the proposed rule are being accepted until May 6. They can be made electronically at regulations.gov by searching for docket ID FWS-HQ-NWRS-2022-0106 in the search bar. — Charles Wallace, WLJ contributing editor

Trent Stewart
Owner & Auctioneer
541-325-3662

Central Oregon Livestock Auction
Centraloregonlivestock@gmail.com
541-475-3851

May 13, 2024
Bred cows & Pairs will start selling at Noon

Field Reps:
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Eric Duarte 541-891-7863
Tim Messner: 541-410-8691
Craig Weaver: 503-741-0861

Complete & Total Herd Disbursement

Bar 99 Cattle out of Dayville
90 hd of Fall Calving Cows
Angus based Cows, Bred to Riverbend & Teixeira Bulls
Due to Calve July 15th for 60 days, 1200lb cows, 2 to 12 years old, 90% Black 10% Bwff, Bangs vaccinated

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MARKET NEWS

WLJ compiles its market reports, ODJ stories and statistics from USDA and independent marketing organizations.

MARKET SITUATION REPORT

MARKET AT A GLANCE					This Week: 4/25/2024		Week Ago		Year Ago	
Choice Fed Steers			181.94		▼		183.00		178.81	
CME Feeder Index			245.15		▲		242.35		202.41	
Boxed Beef Average			295.66		▼		295.80		311.07	
Average Dressed Steers			290.00		▼		293.74		285.03	
Live Slaughter Weight*			1,399		▲		1,398		1,365	
Weekly Slaughter**			620,000		▲		603,000		622,000	
Weekly Beef Production***			524.3		▲		509.8		509.7	
Hide/Offal Value			11.56		▲		11.44		13.92	
Corn Price			4.38		▲		4.30		6.27	
* Average weight for previous week. **Total slaughter for previous week. ***Estimated year-to-date figure in million pounds for previous week.										

CATTLE FUTURES: CME Live Cattle							
	4/19	4/22	4/23	4/24	4/25	High*	Low*
Apr.	18148	18383	18335	18210	18305	19633	15310
Jun.	17568	17805	17715	17525	17785	19975	16853
Aug.	17355	17640	17550	17338	17595	18438	16668
Oct.	17675	17995	17938	17765	17968	18713	17005

CATTLE FUTURES: CME Feeder Cattle							
	4/19	4/22	4/23	4/24	4/25	High*	Low*
Apr.	24133	24290	24375	24310	24488	25723	21608
May	24200	24518	24605	24410	24635	26208	21920
Aug.	25350	25848	25940	25630	25843	27095	22268
Sep.	25443	25938	26048	25750	25955	26048	24910
*High and low figures are for the life of the contract.							

FED CATTLE TRADE		Head Count	Avg. Weight	Avg. Price
WEEKLY WEIGHTED AVERAGES				
Live FOB Steer		9,845	1,359	181.94
Live FOB Heifer		6,789	1,272	181.90
Dressed Del Steer		221	992	290.00
Dressed Del Heifer		N/A	N/A	N/A
SAME PERIOD LAST WEEK				
Live FOB Steer		115	1,450	183.00
Live FOB Heifer		N/A	N/A	N/A
Dressed Del Steer		328	929	293.74
Dressed Del Heifer		N/A	N/A	N/A
SAME PERIOD LAST YEAR				
Live FOB Steer		16,349	1,482	178.81
Live FOB Heifer		5,537	1,337	179.91
Dressed Del Steer		4,719	917	284.47
Dressed Del Heifer		3,723	837	285.03

NATIONAL WEEKLY FED BEEF SLAUGHTER VOLUME: APRIL 21, 2024										
	Domestic			Imported						
Forward Contract	37,436			3,675						
Formula	273,526			5,804						
Negotiated Cash	76,239			168						
Negotiated Grid	35,558			1,675						
Packer Owned	9,300			N/A						
Total	432,059			11,322						

SLAUGHTER FORWARD CONTRACTS		FORWARD BEEF SALES		
Delivery Month			Neg. Sales 0-21 days	1,868
Apr. '24	195,515		Neg. Sales 21+ days	1,103
May '24	113,475		Formula sales	3,714
Jun. '24	98,391		Forward contract sales	223
Jul. '24	81,840		Domestic sales	6,080
Aug. '24	81,524		NAFTA Exports	100

CANADIAN LIVESTOCK PRICES & FEDERAL INSPECTED SLAUGHTER FIGURES				
Alberta Direct Sales (4% shrink)		Price	Weekly Change	
Slaughter Steers, mostly Choice & Select 1-3, 1300-1500 lbs		182.99	+2.12	
Slaughter Heifers, mostly Choice & Select 1-3, 1200-1400 lbs		181.19	+1.84	
Ontario Auctions				
Slaughter Steers, mostly Choice & Select 1-3, 1300-1500 lbs		174.68	-2.23	
Slaughter Heifers, mostly Choice & Select 1-3, 1200-1400 lbs		173.23	-2.46	
Slaughter Cows, Cutter and Utility 1-3, 1100-1400 lbs		115.58	+0.92	
*Price comparison from one week ago.				

Average feeder cattle prices (CND) for week ending Friday, April 12, 2024				
Steers:	Alberta	Saskatchewan	Ontario	
501-600 lbs	309.70	310.40	291.96	
601-700 lbs	291.99	283.92	271.38	
701-800 lbs	256.67	258.99	264.99	
801-900 lbs	234.15	235.19	246.42	
Heifers:				
401-500 lbs	295.66	286.02	265.43	
501-600 lbs	266.29	273.60	263.72	
601-700 lbs	247.93	249.49	235.88	
701-800 lbs	233.29	233.56	223.72	

USDA MEXICO TO U.S. WEEKLY LIVESTOCK IMPORTS				
Feeder cattle imports weekly and yearly volume.				
Species	Current Week	Previous Week	Current Year-to-date	Previous Year-to-date
Feeders	4/15/2024 36,317	4/8/2024 36,229	432,466	380,415

USDA WEEKLY IMPORTED FEEDER CATTLE				
April 25, 2024				
Mexico to United States Feeder Cattle Import Summary				
Receipts EST: 10,100		Week Ago EST: 8,600		Year Ago Act: 9,000
Columbus, NM		Santa Teresa, NM		
Compared Tuesday, steer calves and yearlings sold steady. Heifers steady. Trade moderate to active, demand moderate to good. Supply consisted of steers and spayed heifers weighing 300-600 lbs.		Compared to Tuesday, steer calves and yearlings sold steady. Heifers steady. Trade moderate to active, demand moderate to good. Supply consisted of steers and spayed heifers weighing 300-600 lbs.		
Feeder heifers: Medium and large 1&2		Feeder heifers: Medium and large 1&2		
300-400 lbs		255-265		300-400 lbs 255-265
400-500 lbs		235-245		400-500 lbs 235-245
500-600 lbs		215-225		500-600 lbs 215-225
Feeder steers: Medium and large 1&2		Feeder steers: Medium and large 1&2		
300-400 lbs		310-320		300-400 lbs 310-320
400-500 lbs		280-290		400-500 lbs 280-290
500-600 lbs		250-260		500-600 lbs 250-260
(slide 10 cents on steers and heifers basis 300 lbs. All sales fob port of entry.)				

BEEF REPORT: Weekly Composite Boxed Beef												
WEEK ENDING	COMPREHENSIVE Loads/Price		PRIME Loads/Price		BRANDED Loads/Price		CHOICE Loads/Price		SELECT Loads/Price		UNGRADED Loads/Price	
April 19	6,908	300.88	274	327.02	1,440	304.51	2,136	298.50	674	292.46	2,385	277.73
April 12	6,469	303.29	223	327.69	1,283	305.71	1,866	301.00	624	295.86	2,472	280.01
April 5	6,534	304.50	211	330.53	1,330	308.23	1,996	301.40	616	298.52	2,381	280.00
March 29	7,242	313.31	250	334.69	1,332	317.03	2,346	312.26	701	303.19	2,612	284.77

Cutouts		FED BOXED BEEF						
DATE	CHOICE	SELECT	COW BEEF CUTOUT		50% LEAN		90% LEAN	
Apr 25	295.66	288.41	268.65		60.85		345.75	
Apr 24	295.74	290.42	269.19		84.54		347.15	
Apr 23	297.40	292.76	267.91		86.38		345.56	
Apr 22	295.93	291.87	269.57		N/A		N/A	
Apr 19	295.67	290.83	269.72		88.47		349.31	

Selected Auctions Week Ending April 25, 2024										
DATE MARKET		200-300 lb.	300-400 lb.	400-500 lb.	500-600 lb.	600-700 lb.	700-800 lb.	800 lb. -up	SLAUGHTER COWS SLAUGHTER BULLS	PAIRS REPLACEMENTS
April 19 Blackfoot, ID	N/A			270-302 250-290	245-308 235-291	225-294 210-268	225-268 200-256	210-244 195-232	110-135 139-154	
April 18 Burley, ID	435		335	326 205-325	306-309 159-306	268-280 277	189-246.25	220	93-136 143-157	
Noreport available Emmett, ID										
April 20 Eugene, OR	832		240-284* 230-280*	280-333* 240-311*	225-285* 240-310*	214-270* 208-260*	210-254* 155-207*	190-241* 180-235*	92-128 130-142	800-3,000 670-1,625
April 22 Madras, OR	214								115-145 168-185.50	2,000-2,450 1,650-2,050
April 17 Vale, OR	1,209		315-370 285-326	290-337.50 275-309	270-310 245-286	245-295 221-264	225-267 210-240	190-230 204-219	109-131 128-164.50	1,500-2,725
Noreport available Davenport, WA										
April 18 Toppenish, WA	1,700	300*	316*	310-337.50* 292-337.50*	293-327* 280-292.50*	279.75-280* 273.50-275*			120-135 148-156.50	
Noreport available										
Orland, CA										
April 22 Escalon, CA	N/A		300-377 300-342		250-260 250-320		200-270 150-220	135-160 110-140	88-128 85-136	800-1,725 700-1,300
April 22 Famoso, CA	340		275-300 250-300	280-324 250-320		250-286 200-240	225-235	180-200 160-184	110-165 125-149	
Noreport available Galt, CA										
Noreport available Turlock, CA										
April 16 Salina, UT	598		340-400 295-310	280-342.50 250-332.50	250-320 235-298	230-290 221-265	212.50-245 171-255	172.50-235 134.75-219	113-140 119-195	1,575-2,850

April 22 Iowa	9,604	405 370	394-425 330-390	307-416 280-341	282-339 253-314	252-319.75 215-288	245-283.50 212.50-256.50	212-260.50 195-221.75	103-157.50 110-174	
April 23 Miles City, MT	995			341-370 320	330-334 294-298	281 260.50-284	265 250	219.50-227 209-215.50	115-142 113-157	2,500
April 24 Bassett, NE	3,500		417.50 360-365	397-417.50 322-363	330-369 305-334.50	292-333.25 260.50-301	270-305.75 237.50-262	242.25-261 215.50		
April 20 Ericson, NE	2,365	377.50-380	372.50-407.50 345-422.50	357.50-390 310-347	311-364 283-308	299.25-311 240-261	283.75 237.50-249	235.50-244 192-224		2,400-3,375 2,600
April 23 Imperial, NE	1,429		394 330-342.50	379	331-351 274-285	300 243-273	250-269 228.75-263	239.75-256.75 228.50-237		
Noreport available Kearney, NE										
Noreport available Lexington, NE										
Noreport available Ogallala, NE										
April 18 Valentine, NE	3,028		327.50	347.50-391 307-334	326-364 272-322	306-334 248-291.50	289-305.50 228.50-272	247-264 182-213		
April 19 Herreid, SD	2,617			364 310	314-329 258-297.50	284.50-299.50 252.50-269	266-287.50 235-256.75	229-268.50 230.50-246		
April 18 Torrington, WY	2,746		380	353-370 315-332.50	322-345 282-311	289-311 255-286	264-291.50 235-264	224-268 226		

April 18 Willcox, AZ	1,338	300.50-360 279-345	313.50-377.50 250.50-335	283.50-327.50 220.50-290	249.50-300 218-257.50	233.50-270 209.50-238			90-144 127-152	2,000-2,475 1,500-1,975
April 22 Colorado	5,350		370-397.50 325-340	323-372 291-325	291-348 265-309	270-305 235-291	231-283 221-250	210-246 170-187	111-140 121-185	1,250-3,500 900-2,950
April 17 La Junta, CO	2,573		352-382.50 332-340	343-372 303-334	319-351 271-309	262-317 235-270	245-283.50 221-241	210-231 221-241	110-128 121-161	
April 20 Loma, CO	543		360-410 335-370	335-360 290-340	300-355 270-300	285-307 245-275	240-285 200-235	185-255 160-220	130-159 140-160	2,500-3,100 2,800-2,900
April 24 Dodge City, KS	2,388		342.50-365 313-326	326-358 347.50	297.50-332.50 294	270-295 230.50-265	241.50-292 222.50-245	214.75-263 180.50-219.35	116-137 123-160	2,675-3,035 1,900-2,010
April 18 Pratt, KS	5,290		339-370 282.50-330	317.50-356 274-314	283-328 250-274	257-292 241-265	236-280 215.50-241.50	208.50-256 196.25-230.50	120-137.50 134-156	
April 18 Salina, KS	2,913		360-400 335-375	332-372.50 312.50-350	312-346 278-303	251-338 242-289	259-294 224-250	227.75-245.50 206-224.50		
April 25 Clovis, NM	1,845	315	352-385 265-310	285-368 252-314	255-315 230-280	228-284 225-255	230-246 194-226	198-234 136-194	115.50-130 111.25-155	1,150-2,625 700-2,025
April 24 El Reno, OK	1,500		322.50	335-390 305-310	270-330 247.50-292.50	280-312.20 240-272.50	255-262.50			
April 23 McAlester, OK	880		317-370 303-343	325-368 270-325	283-311 265-290	245-265 210-270	204-232 195-213	211 160-173	116-137 127-158	1,475-2,050 1,050-1,925
April 23 Oklahoma City, OK	6,307		350-405 327-334	270-354 270-317	281-339 248-286	258-315.50 235-274.50	233-273 192-240	197-250 182-241		
April 19 Cuero, TX	1,428	311-435 287-410	301-345 278-328	278-336 252-314	255-306 242-290	232-280 210-258	205-250 180**224		85-131 90-1	

Fewer cattle in the nation, but more in feedlots

The April Cattle on Feed report pegs feedlot inventories at 11.82 million head, up 1.49% from one year ago. Feedlot inventories continue to be stubbornly slow to decline despite declining cattle numbers.

The latest report included the quarterly breakdown of feedlot inventories by gender. The number of steers on feed April 1 was 7.266 million head, up 1.7% year over year, and the heifers on feed inventory was 4.555 million head, up 1.1% from last year.

Heifers made up 38.5% of total feedlot inventories, down from 39.7% in January. While the heifer percentage in feedlots remains above the average of the past 10 years, the decline from January to April is an encouraging sign that heifer feeding is perhaps slowing. During rapid herd expansion in 2015-17, the heifer percentage of feedlot inventories dropped below 34% and averaged below 33% for 10 consecutive quarters, i.e. two and a half years. Heifer feeding is expected to decrease significantly more in the coming months.

Feedlot placements in March were down 12.3% year over year, a larger decrease than expected. In fact, feedlot placements have been declining for many months in response to decreased feeder cattle supplies.

Figure 1 shows that average monthly feedlot placements (12-month moving average) in March were at the lowest level since April 2017. Total placements in the last six months (October-March), which would account for the bulk of cattle currently in feedlots, is down 2.3% from the same period one year ago.

How, then, can feedlot

inventories be above year-earlier levels as they have been for the last seven months? The answer is that feedlot marketing rates have fallen even faster than placement rates. Fewer cattle are staying in feedlots longer. In the latest Cattle on Feed report, March marketings were down 13.7% year over year, with monthly marketings just 14.4% of the March 1 feedlot inventory.

Figure 2 shows the average (12-month moving average) feedlot marketings as a percentage of cattle on feed. Average feedlot marketings in March were 15.4% of feedlot inventories for the past 12 months, below 15.5% for the first time in data back to 1997.

Feedlots have an incentive to keep inventories as close to capacity as possible. One way is to slow down the turnover rate, effectively making fewer cattle turn into larger inventories. The result is more days on feed and heavier carcass weights. Steer carcass weights have averaged 25 pounds heavier year over year for the past four weeks, with heifer carcasses over 21 lbs. heavier. There are limits to how much feedlots can slow marketings, but feedlots are expected to push carcass weights as far as possible in the coming months. Feedlot inventories are expected to decline in the next few months despite feedlot actions to delay the inevitable. — **Derrell S. Peel, Oklahoma State University Extension livestock marketing specialist**

Figure 1. Feedlot Placements
1000 head, 12 Month Moving Average



Figure 2. Feedlot Marketings as % of Cattle on Feed
12 Month Moving Average



Boxed beef prices still sluggish

MARKETS
(from page 1)

and calves on feed as of April 1 up 1% from a year earlier. Placements were 12% lower at 1.75 million head. Marketings were 14% below a year ago, and other disappearance totaled 8% higher.

Feeder cattle

Feeder cattle futures closed higher over the week. The April contract gained \$3.27 to close at \$244.87, and the May contract gained \$3.70 to close at \$246.25.

The CME Feeder Cattle Index gained close to \$3 to close at \$245.15.

Corn futures were higher, with the May contract up 15 cents to \$4.41 and the July contract up 16 cents to \$4.52.

“With turn-out season quickly approaching, continuing to watch these feeder cattle sales in the countryside will be insightful as everyone is curious about what the big summertime video sales are going to accomplish,” Stewart said.

Missouri: Joplin Regional Stockyards in Carthage sold 6,228 head on Monday. Compared to the last auction, feeder steers sold \$3-7 higher. Feeder heifers sold \$6-12 higher. Benchmark steers averaging 772 lbs. sold between \$237-265, averaging \$247.82.

Nebraska: Gordon Livestock in Gordon sold 1,121 head on Tuesday. Due to a lack of a recent sale, an accurate trend could not be given. Benchmark steers averaging 776 lbs. sold for \$264.50.

Oklahoma: Oklahoma National Stockyards in Oklahoma City sold 6,500 head on Monday. Compared to a week earlier, feeder steers and heifers sold \$4-8 higher. Steer and heifer calves were not well tested, but a sharply higher undertone was noted. Benchmark steers averaging 765 lbs. \$248-270.50, averaging \$260.85. — **Anna Miller, WLJ managing editor**



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Special Stocker & Feeder Sale

THURSDAY, MAY 2ND, 2024

TEAGUE, MAYS & CARMICHAEL (1,100) - Ang & Ang X strs, 700-1,000#

5-J FARMS (400) - Ang hfrs, 800-900#

TERRELL RANCH (350) - Char Ang X & Ang strs & hfrs, 550-700#

DON & BECKY PARKER (290) - Ang strs & hfrs, 450-625#

WILSON FLYING DIAMOND (145) - (93) Rd Ang strs & replc qulty hfrs, 600-650#, (52) Rd Ang strs & hfrs, 400-475#

Special Stockcow & Cow/Calf Pair Sale w/ Regular Sale

WEDNESDAY, MAY 1ST, 2024

Cow / Calf Pairs

LOGAN RANCH (185) - (100) Ang hfrs w/ March calves at side, 1st calf, (85) F1 BWF hfrs with March calves at side, 1st calf

ROD THAYER (34) - (15) Ang Hfrs w/ calves at side, 1st Calf, (19) Ang X cows with calves at side, SS-ST

Cow / Calf Pairs

ANDY APPEGARTH & C.R. JEWEL (10) - Ang cows, 3 y/o ST, bred to SimAngus bulls, due June 15th, expo for 45 days.

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May Specials

Tues., May 7

Tues., May 21

Burgers at the Barn

Sat., May 4

June Specials

Tues., June 4

Tues., June 18

TLAY Spring Feeder Sales

Special Dedicated to Showcasing Calves and Yearlings from Consignors with 50 Head or Less at 9 a.m.

Burgers at the Barn // Special Weigh-Cow Sale & Recreational Cattle

Also Featuring: 100 Angus-Wagyu Cross Cows, 4-7 Years-Old, Bred to Wagyu Bulls From Classic Farms

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Special Dedicated to Showcasing Calves and Yearlings from Consignors with 50 Head or Less at 9 a.m.

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	John Luiz 209-480-5101	Brandon Baba 209-480-1267
	Jake Bettencourt 209-262-4019	Bud Cozzi 209-652-4480
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SALE REPORTS

DEGRAND ANGUS BULL SALE

April 19, Baker, MT
88 Yearling bulls . \$5,182
Auctioneer: Colby Hales

TOPS: DeGrand 3029 Esquire, 2/25/23 by EGLEsquire 7053; to Lucky 7 Angus, Riverton, WY, \$13,000. DeGrand 3008 Capitalist, 2/19/23 by LD Capitalist 316; to Joe Vassau, Forsyth, MT, \$11,000. DeGrand 3011 Confidence, 2/23/23 by Sterling Confidence Plus 804; to Joe Vassau, Forsyth, MT, \$10,750. DeGrand 3061 Justified, 3/9/23 by KG Justified 3023; to Joe Vassar, Billings, MT, \$9,250. DeGrand 3212 Esquire, 4/7/23 by Lucky 7 Esquire 0329; to Dave Wolff, Ekala-ka, MT, \$8,250. — **DEVIN MURNIN**

TIMBER LINE RANCH BULL SALE

April 19, Manhattan, MT
34 Yearling bulls . \$6,141
41 Commercial open

heifers 2,200
Auctioneer: Joe Goggins
Manager: Ron Frye
Marketing

TOPS: Timber Line BenchmarkKH32K, 3/3/23 by Mill Brae Benchmark 9016; to Bar JV Angus, Fairview, MT, \$17,500. Timber Line Impulse 473, 3/27/23 by Sitz Incentive 704H; to Eagle Ridge Ranch, Wilsall, MT, \$8,000. TimberLineHelix 363, 3/23/23 by RR Cowboy Kind 0376; to Barragreed Cattle Co., Columbus, MT, \$7,500. Timber Line Helix 323, 3/22/23 by RR Cowboy Kind 0376; to Eagle Ridge Ranch, Wilsall, MT, \$7,500. — **DEVIN MURNIN**

STUBER RANCH SALE
April 20, Bowman, ND
52 Registered open
heifers \$3,360
106 Commercial open
heifers 2,019
24 Commercial F1 Baldy
open heifers 2,400
Auctioneer: Joe Goggins

TOPS—Bulls: SR Lyric 23L, 2/27/23 by CL1 Comino 0186H; to Churchill Cattle Co., Manhattan, MT, and Loehr Herefords Farms, Peoria, IL, \$27,500. SR Marvel 963L ET, 4/2/23 by CL1 Domino 993G1ET; to Baker Farms, Streator, IL, \$18,000. SR Venture 1772K, 8/18/22 by WHR 290E B901 Beefmaker 250G; to Engelhaupt Herefords, Butte, NE, \$12,000. SR M&M Venture 443L ET, 3/23/23 by WHR 290E B901 Beefmaker 250G; to Ryan Wolff, Fredonia, ND, \$11,000. SR Stellar 743L, 3/1/23 by Stardance M8086 ET; to Jinaye Yanotta, Evesham, SK, \$10,000. SR Dominate 943L ET, 4/1/23 by SR Dominate 308FET; to Rankin and Sons Inc., Draper, SD, \$10,000. **Heifers:** SR Venita 3042L ET, 3/24/23 by WHR 290E B901 Beefmaker 250G; to Roger Jennings, Palmyra, IL, \$10,000. SR Vanita 3091L, 3/30/23 by Birdwell Van-

guard 5022 9337; to Roger Jennings, Palmyra, IL, \$6,500. SR Flarita 3106L, 4/7/23 by Bar S LHF 1056 MR 7167 050ET; to Stroh Herefords, Killdeer, ND, \$6,500. — **DEVIN MURNIN**

LINDSKOV'S LT RANCH BULL SALE

April 20, Isabel, SD
201 Charolais
bulls \$12,209
189 Angus bulls . 13,875

TOPS—Charolais bulls: LT Global 3322 PLD ET, 2/5/23 by LT Atlas 0251 PLD; to Full Circle Cattle Co., Lakin, KS, J & J Trust Charolais, Parkston, SD, Elder Charolais Farms, Coronach, SK, Serhienko Cattle Co., Maymont, SK, Kay-RCharolais, Waskatenau, AB, and W2 Farms, LeRoy, SK,

\$300,000. LT Premier 3304 PLD ET, 2/3/23 by LT Badge 9184 PLD; to Kenmere Charolais, Holbrook, NSW Australia, \$150,000. LT Token 3436 PLD, 2/19/23 by LT Badge 9184 PLD; to Wilgenbusch Charolais, Halbrite, SK, \$50,000. LT Senator 3372 PLD, 2/11/23 by LT Governor 1560 PLD; to Footprint Farms, Esther, AB, \$39,000. LT Amigo 3450 PLD, 2/21/23 by Elder's Houlio 4H; to L.G. Herndon Farms, Lyons, GA, and Sturgess Double S Cattle, LaRue, TX, \$32,000. LT Ambassador 3391 PLD, 2/13/23 by LT Governor 1560 PLD; to R Lazy B Ranch, Nome, ND, \$28,000. LT Volcanic 3368 PLD, 2/11/23 by LT Badge 9184 PLD; to Hubert Charolais Ranch, Oakley, KS,

\$27,500. **Angus bulls:** LT Forbes 3012, 2/26/23 by Tehama Testament; to Kovarik Cattle Co., Ord, NE, and Genex, Shawano, WI, \$150,000. LT Resolution 121L, 2/23/23 by Coleman Resolve 7219; to Koupal's B&B Angus, Dante, SD, Maher Angus Ranch, Morristown, SD, \$80,000. LT Testmant 3046, 3/6/23 by Tehama Testament; to Frederickson Ranch, Spearfish, SD, and Duppong's Willow Creek, Glen Ullin, ND, \$70,000. LT Lieutenant 3186, 2/11/23 by SITZ Robust 717H; to Northwest Livestock, Meridian, ID, \$65,000. LT Universal 73L, 2/5/23 by HF Alcatraz 60F; to Wilson Angus Ranch, Watford City, ND, \$52,000. — **TY GROSHANS**



SALE CALENDAR

Sale Calendar is a service to our advertisers. There is a minimum advertising requirement to be eligible to be listed in the Sale Calendar. Contact your fieldman for more information or to have your date added to the Sale Calendar. We will only run auction sale dates or private treaty start dates.

ALL BREEDS

Sep. 15 – Visalia Livestock Bull Sale, Visalia, CA
Oct. 5 – Turlock Livestock All-Breeds Bull Sale, Turlock, CA
Oct. 6 – Cal Poly Bull Test Sale, San Luis Obispo, CA

ANGUS

May 25 – Western Summit, Female Sale, Galt, CA
Jun. 22 – Baldrige Performance Angus, Female Sale, North Platte, NE
Aug. 24 – Riverbend Ranch, Female Sale, Idaho Falls, ID
Sep. 5 – Vintage Angus, Bull Sale, LaGrange, CA
Sep. 6 – Byrd Cattle, Bull & Female Sale, Red Bluff, CA
Sep. 7 – EZ Angus Ranch, Bull Sale, Farmington, CA
Sep. 8 – Heritage Bull Sale, Wilton, CA
Sep. 9 – Rhoades Angus, Bull Sale, Cambria, CA
Sep. 10 – O'Neal Ranch, Bull Sale, Madera, CA
Sep. 11 – Teixeira Cattle, Bull Sale, Pismo Beach, CA
Sep. 12 – Donati Ranch & O'Connell Cattle, Bull Sale, Oroville, CA
Sep. 13 – Tehama Angus, Bull Sale, Gerber, CA
Sep. 14 – Arrelano Bravo, Bull Sale, Galt, CA
Sep. 17 – Poss Angus, Female Sale, Scotia, NE
Sep. 18 – Bullseye Breeders, Bull Sale, Modesto, CA
Sep. 19 – Rancho Casino/Dal Porto Livestock, Bull Sale, Denair, CA
Sep. 20 – Dixie Valley Angus, Bull Sale, Galt, CA
Sep. 21 – Jorgensen Land & Cattle, Female Sale, Ideal,

SD
Sep. 24 – Thomas Angus Ranch, Bull Sale, Galt, CA
Sep. 26 – Beef Solutions, Bull Sale, Ione, CA
Sep. 28 – K Bar D Ranch, Female Sale, Redmond, OR
Sep. 28 – Gohr Cattle, Show Heifer Sale, Madras, OR
Sep. 28 – Marcy Livestock, Female Sale, Gordon, NE
Sep. 29 – Traynham Ranches, Bull & Female Sale, Ft. Klamath, OR
Oct. 5 – Colyer Hereford & Angus, Female Sale, Bruneau, ID
Oct. 8 – 9 Peaks Angus Ranch, Bull Sale, Ft. Rock, OR
Oct. 12 – EZ Angus, Female Sale, Porterville, CA
Oct. 13 – Vintage Angus Ranch, Female Sale, Modesto, CA

HEREFORD

Sep. 5 – Sierra Ranches, Bull Sale, LaGrange, CA
Sep. 9 – Genoa Livestock, Bull & Female Sale, Minden, NV
Sep. 28 – Gohr Cattle, Show Heifer Sale, Madras, OR
Oct. 5 – Colyer Hereford & Angus, Female Sale, Bruneau, ID

RED ANGUS

May 9 – Koenig Ranch Reds, Production Sale, Glasgow, MT
Sep. 21 – McPhee Red Angus, Production Sale, Lodi, CA
Sep. 22 – Stegall Cattle, Bull Sale, Colusa, CA

SIMANGUS

Sep. 18 – Bullseye Breeders Bull Sale, Modesto, CA
Sep. 25 – Eagle Pass Ranch, Bull Sale, Dos Palos, CA
Sep. 26 – Beef Solutions, Bull Sale, Ione, CA
Sep. 29 – Traynham Ranches, Bull & Female Sale, Ft. Klamath, OR
Oct. 12 – Trinity Farms, Female Sale, Ellensburg, WA

WAGYU

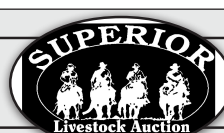
May 25 – Bar R Wagyu, Production Sale, Pullman, WA

COMMERCIAL

May 2 – Western Video Market Internet Sale, CA
May 23 – Western Video Market Internet Sale, CA
Jun. 6 – Western Video Market Internet Sale, CA
Jun. 20 – NLVA Early Summer Special, Billings, MT
Jul. 8 – Western Video Market Reno Sale, Reno, NV
Jul. 22 – NLVA Summertime Classic, Billings, MT
Jul. 27 – Cattlemen's Livestock Market Annual Female Sale, Galt, CA
Aug. 3 – Turlock Livestock Auction Special Female Sale, Turlock, CA
Aug. 12 – Western Video Market Cheyenne Sale, Cheyenne, WY
Aug. 19 – NLVA Early Fall Preview, Billings, MT
Aug. 24 – Mobile Cattle Marketing Female Sale, Petaluma, CA
Sep. 16 – NLVA Fall Premier Special, Billings, MT

HORSE

May 18 – Redtail Ranch Performance Horse & Equipment Sale, Star, ID
May 18 – Feather River College Horse Sale, Quincy, CA
May 25 – Full House Horse Sale, Newcastle, WY
Jun. 1 – Ranchers Horse Sale, Juntura, OR
Jun. 8 – Shelman Family Horse Sale, Burns, OR
Jun. 22 – Fort Ranch Horse Sale, Corrinne, UT
Jul. 12 – High Desert Quarter Horse Sale, Redmond, OR
Aug. 17 – Memory Ranch Foal Sale, Wells, NV
Sep. 21 – Snaffle Bit Futurity Sale, Reno, NV
Oct. 12 – RM Livestock Horse Sale, Paso Robles, CA



VIDEO AUCTION

GULF COAST CLASSIC VIDEO AUCTION

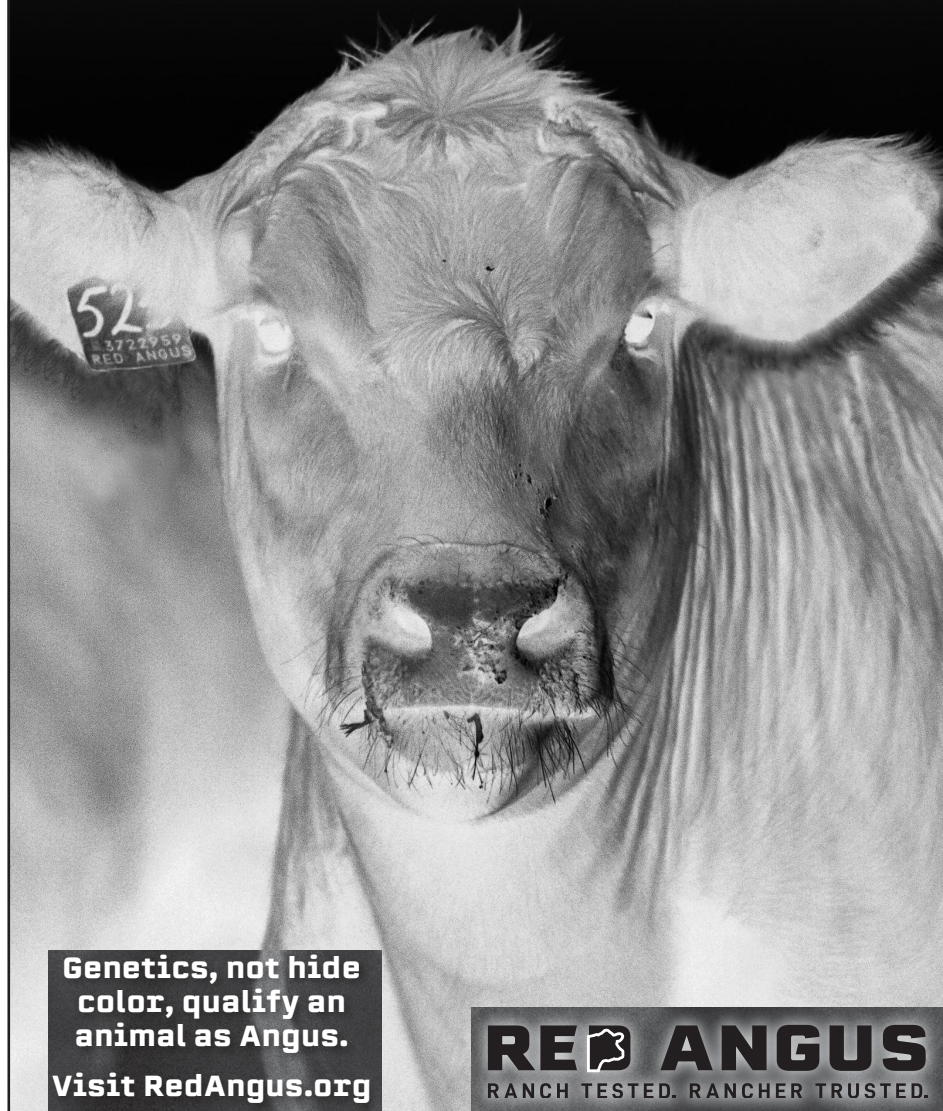
April 18-19, Natchitoches, LA
 Superior Livestock Auction hosted the Gulf Coast Classic Video Auction live on April 18-19 from the Natchitoches Event Center in Natchitoches, LA. Cattle producers sold 64,867 head of calves, yearlings and bred stock, totaling 510 lots from 25 states for this offering. Strong buyer participation from hundreds of bidders

throughout the auction resulted in 132 different successful buyers. Cattle were sold on contract to deliver immediately through December 2024. Regions 3/4/5/6 feeder steers struggled to remain steady with the last auction and were met with prices of \$2-5 lower. Regions 3/4/5/6 feeder heifers saw advances of \$2-5 over the last offering. Regions 1/2 feeder steers were only lightly tested but remained steady. Regions 1/2 weaned calves were well received and while

most were fully steady, strong genetic programs were rewarded with \$10 premiums. Beef-dairy crosses failed to hold steady with the last auction. Bred stock saw strong demand for young pairs and fall-bred cows. Florida calves were as much as \$30 higher than last year's offering. Louisiana calves also met with strong demand and buyer participation at \$40 over last year's offering. Regions 3/4/5/6 calves were fully steady with the last auction.

PARAMOUNT

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Quantifying the value of good management

In comparison to the purebred seedstock, stocker or finishing segments of beef production, the commercial cow-calf sector shouldn't require as much day-to-day management and labor input. Well-managed cow-calf operations can concentrate these inputs into short time frames focused on critical control points of production. The critical control points focus on improving herd health, reducing parasites, pregnancy checks to make sure the cost of cow maintenance is rewarded in the form of a weaned calf,

and management to improve the value of calves produced. The April 16 Oklahoma market report shows that 520-pound steers sold at an average value of \$315/cwt, translating to a per-head value of \$1,638; a price which should result in a good profit margin beyond the annual maintenance cost of the cow that produced the calf. Historically low current U.S. cow herd inventories and limited evidence of heifer retention indicates the robust markets we currently enjoy should be sustained for at least the

next couple of years. In such times, it can be easy to overlook the critical control points which result in improving the value of calves. **Control what you can** The value of good management has never been higher. Consider the following:

- The cow that breeds one heat cycle earlier and calves 21 days earlier will yield a calf approximately 40 lbs. heavier the day you wean. At current prices, that is an extra \$125 per cow.

- Castrated steers bring \$5-10/cwt more than bulls. The bigger the bull calves get, the larger the discount. The earlier in life bull calves can be castrated, the less stressful it is for the calf. Testosterone production in intact bulls is very low until puberty. Weaning weights of intact bulls are not heavier compared to steers.
- Dehorned or naturally polled calves sell at a \$5-10/cwt premium over calves with horns.
- Growth implants can increase gains by 10-20%. For the expense of approximately \$2

per implant resulting in an extra 18 lbs. of added pay weight, this equates to over \$55 of additional value per head. Weaning weights of growth implanted steers are often heavier than intact bull calves.

- Preconditioning typically bundles the best management practices of castration, dehorning, deworming and bunk training with a nutritional program to accommodate a 45-day on ranch weaning period. Two rounds of vaccinations (respiratory and blackleg) can be documented as a marketing tool.

One program is the Oklahoma Quality Beef Network

(OQBN) which provides producers the opportunity to certify calves and participate in special sales. Information about the OQBN is available at www.oqbn.okstate.edu. The premiums for OQBN calves averaged approximately \$13/cwt over the value of non-preconditioned calves from 2011-22. The most optimum time for castration, dehorning and the first round of vaccinations in order to meet the specifications for preconditioned calves is two to four months of age. — **Mark Z. Johnson, Oklahoma State University Extension beef cattle breeding specialist**



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Officials caution against consuming raw milk

HPAI (from page 1) positive influenza A detection diagnostic results (such as PCR or genetic sequencing) to APHIS. In addition, they must report positive influenza A serology diagnostic results to APHIS.

In mid-April, USDA identified a shift in an H5N1 sample from a dairy cow in Kansas that suggests the virus has an adaptation to mammals. However, the agency maintains they have not found changes to the virus that would make it transmissible to humans and between people. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has not changed its overall risk assessment for the general public as the sample shift has been seen previously in other mammalian infections and doesn't impact viral transmissions.

"The novel movement of H5N1 between wild birds and dairy cows requires further testing and time to develop a critical understanding to support any future courses of action," USDA said. "This Federal Order is critical to increasing the information available for USDA."

The agency said affected cows recover after supported care with little to no associated mortality.

USDA began avian influenza vaccine trials in April, testing several vaccine candidates. Initial data from the study with a single vaccine dose are expected to be ready in May, and two-dose vaccine data in June.

If the trials are successful, there are 20 stages to complete before the vaccine will be readily available from a manufacturer, which typically takes two-and-a-half to three years.

However, in emergency situations, manufacturers may speed up development. USDA estimates 18-24 months in a best-case scenario before a vaccine would be readily accessible for poultry.

Positive milk samples

In an April 23 update, the FDA reported it found fragments of the HPAI virus in milk samples. The agency tested samples by PCR testing and found fragments of the virus, which it said is not the same as infectious virus.

"Based on available information, pasteurization is likely to inactivate the virus, however the process is not expected to remove the presence of viral particles," the FDA said.

"To date, we have seen nothing that would change our assessment that the commercial milk supply is safe," the agency continued. "Results from multiple studies will be made available in the next few days to weeks."

Federal health agencies, along with dairy industry groups, caution against the consumption of raw, unpasteurized milk.

"The data cited by FDA is consistent with many other studies demonstrating that the legally required temperature and time for milk pasteurization will readily inactivate HPAI," the National Milk Producers Federation and International Dairy Foods Association said in a joint statement. "Viral fragments detected after pasteurization are nothing more than evidence that the virus is dead; they have zero impact on human health." — **Anna Miller, WLJ managing editor**



COMING EVENTS

(Send calendar of events information to editorial@wlj.net.)

May 22-23 – The California Cattlemen's Association 2024 Feeder Meeting will take place at the San Diego Hilton Bayfront in San Diego, CA. Details: calcattlemen.org/events.

May 28-30 – The Montana Stockgrowers Association MidYear Meeting will be held in Miles City, MT, at the Custer County Event Center. Sunset Banquet tickets include dinner, live music by Kyle Shobe and the Walk 'Em Boys, games and a silent and live auction. Registration: www.mtbeef.org/msga-events.

June 26-27 – The California Cattlemen's Association MidYear Meeting will be held at the Nugget Casino Resort in Sparks, NV. New this year, full meeting registration includes a ticket to the Reno Rodeo's Wednesday night performance. Details: calcattlemen.org/events.